

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-24 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 11 and 21 are amended and claims 4 and 14 are cancelled.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) do not present any additional claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3-5, 7, 8, 13-15, 17 and 18. By this Amendment, the allowable features of claims 4 and 14 have been incorporated into claims 1 and 11, respectively. Furthermore, the allowable features of claims 4 and 14 have been incorporated into claim 21. For the reasons discussed below, all of claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-24 are allowable.

The rejections of claims 1, 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Shimatani, U.S. Patent No. 5,396,607, claims 1, 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Tsuzuki, U.S. Patent No. 6,281,924, and claims 10 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Shimatani in view of Applicant Admitted Related Art have been rendered moot by the incorporation of allowable features from claims 4 and 14 into claims 1 and 11, respectively.

Claims 21-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Shimatani or Tsuzuki.

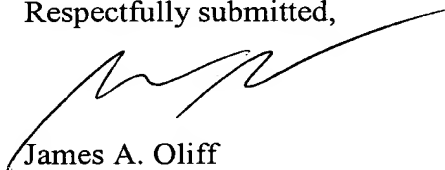
For reasons similar to claims 1 and 11, Shimatani and Tsuzuki fail to disclose or suggest a computer readable medium with a routine for consecutively filling tile blocks in accordance with an order of the tile blocks to create a desired shade, wherein the tile blocks are arranged such that at least a shade level at an end of a row of a first tile block, that is

referred first for scanning, is adjacent to a next higher shade level of a second offset tile block, as recited in claim 21. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3, 5-13 and 15-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: September 28, 2005

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